

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /102 W

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R 241354Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7529

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 4800

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, IS, XF

SUBJECT: FEDAYEEN THREATS OF FURTHER OPERATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL

REF: TEL AVIV 2384 (NOTAL)

1. PFLP/GC IS SMALL, MAVERICK FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS SELDOM COOPERATED WITH ANY OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, ALTHOUGH IF PRESENTLY APPEARS BE ENGAGING IN SOME LOOSE DEGREE OF COOPERATION WITH PFLP AND ALF AS WELL AS RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM IRAQ AND POSSIBLY LIBYA IN PURSUIT OF COMMONLY-SHARED OBJECTIVE OF KILLING CHANCES FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. ON OTHER HAND, WE DOUBT IT HAS ABANDONED ITS PAST PATTERN OF INDEPENDENT OPERATIONS, AND IT HAS VERY LIMITED RESOURCES WITHIN ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IT CAN COUNT ON ESTIMATED TOTAL OF NO MORE THAN 200 -REGULARS-.,

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MOST OF WHOM ARE BASED IN LEBANON. DANGER FROM PFLP/GC LIES

IN GREATER DEGREE OF FANATICISM AND DISCIPLINE ON PART OF ITS MEMBERS COMPARED TO MOST MEMBERS OTHER FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS. THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN EVIDENT AT KIRYAT SHEMONA.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT, IN LIGHT ABOVE FACTORS, PFLP/GC HAS ONLY LIMITED CAPABILITY MOUNT CONCERTED CAMPAIGN OF TERROR WITHIN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND ISRAEL, AND THAT ITS GREATEST POTENTIAL LIES IN SPORADIC, SMALL-SCALE OPERATIONS CARRIED OUT ALONG OR NEAR ISRAELI-LEBANESE BORDER. HOWEVER, PFLP/GC MAY HAVE CAPABILITY OF MOUNTING ISOLATED TERRORIST ACT OR ACTS DEEP INSIDE ISRAEL, AND ITS FANATICISM LEANDS WEIGHT TO ITS THREATS OF ATTACKING TOURISTS AND OTHERS. MANY EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS OF FEDAYEEN SCENE HERE ARE CONVINCED THAT THREE PFLP/GC MEMBERS WHO ATTACKED KIRYAT SHEMONA PENETRATED SETTLEMENT SOME TIME PRIOR TO ACTUAL ATTACK, USING FORGED ISRAELI ID CARDS (COPIES OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SHOWN HERE BY PFLP/GC) IN NAMES OF ISRAELI JEWS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES. THEREFORE IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT PFLP/GC MIGHT ATTEMPT TO MOUNT SOMETHING LIKE LOD AIRPORT ATTACK DIRECTED AGAINST TOURISTS. SUCCESS OF SUCH ATTEMPT WOULD, OF COURSE, DEPEND UPON CAPABILITY OF ISRAELI SECURITY FORCES TO DETECT IT IN ADVANCE.

3. HAVING SAID THIS, WE MUST REITERATE OUR ASSESSMENT (BEIRUT 4624 AND 4426) THAT PRIMARY DANGER PRESENTED BY ACTIONS OF PFLP/GC (WHICH HAVE HAD HEADY EMOTIONAL IMPACT ON FEDAYEEN RANK-AND-FILE AND PALESTINIANS IN GENERAL) IS THAT THEY WILL PROMPT INCREASED OR RENEWED RESORT TO CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS FROM LEBANON AND/OR TERRORIST OPERATIONS IN ISRAEL AND ELSEWHERE BY LARGER FEDAYEEN GROUPS CAPABLE OF INFLECTING GREATER DAMAGE-- E.G., BY PFLP "REJECTIONISTS" AND EVEN BY SA'QA AND FATAH/BLACK SEPTEMBER, WHOSE LEADERS CANNOT ALLOW THEMSELVES BE OUT-CLASSED IN ON-GOING POWER-STRUGGLE BETWEEN "REJECTIONISTS" AND "MODERATES" FOR CONTROL OF FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT. SHOULD THIS HAPPEN (AND IN OUR JUDGMENT IT IS QUITE LIKELY), WE CAN EXPECT NEW UPSURGE IN PALESTINIAN TERRORISM NOT ONLY WITHIN ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BUT ALSO AGAINST "TARGETS" IN WORLD AT LARGE.

4. WE HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO PFLP/GC VOWS AND THREATS OF FURTHER MAYHEM AGAINST ISRAELIS EVER SINCE KIRYAT SHEMONA RAID. INTERVIEW PUBLISHED HERE APRIL 22, FOR EXAMPLE, QUOTED PFLP/GC LEADERSHIP AS STATING, INTER ALIA, THAT "THERE WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE OPERATIONS LIKE KIRYAT SHEMONA.... WE WILL STRIKE AT ISRAELIS WHEREVER THEY ARE.... WE WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSASSINATION OF COL. JOSEPH ALLON, ISRAELI MILITARY ATTACHE AT WASHINGTON, IN 1973, FOR EXPLOSION ABOARD SWISSAIR PLANE AT ZURICH IN 1970... AND FOR ATTACK ON AUSTRIAN AIRLINES PLANE AT VIENNA THAT SAME YEAR". THEY ALSO TOOK PAINS TO WARN THAT ANY FEDAYEEN LEADER WHO ACCEPTS PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IS "TRAITOR" (MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY PDPLP'S NAYEF HAWATMEH) AND TO

CHORTLE THAT "THERE IS COMMON GROUND BETWEEN HAWKS LIKE DAYAN AND OUSELVES" SINCE "WE BOTH WANT...TO PREVENT ANY PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS." ALL OF THIS, IN OUR OPINION, IS AIMED PRIMARILY AT PALESTINIAN AND ARAB CONSUMPTION, WITH PFLP/GC AND OTHER FEDAYEEN ANTI-SETTLEMENT DIE-HARDS DOING THEIR UTMOST TO WARN PLO "MODERATES" THAT THEIR HOPES FOR SOME KIND OF FEDAYEEN ASSOCIATION WITH SETTLEMENT EFFORT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MATERIALIZE. AS WE HAVE REPORTED ON VARIOUS RECENT OCCASIONS, DIE-HARDS HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS IN PROMOTING THIS THEME SINCE KIRYAT SHEMONA RAID.
GODLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, MILITARY PLANS, MILITARY POLICIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BEIRUT04800
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740097-0084
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740419/aaaaaqmt.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TEL AVIV 2384 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAR 2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <07 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FEDAYEEN THREATS OF FURTHER OPERATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, IS, XF, PFLP/GC
To: STATE TEL AVIV
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005